

S. A. 634. 1003  
A  
S E R M O N

Preached before the  
Incorporated SOCIETY  
FOR THE  
*Propagation of the Gospel in  
Foreign Parts;*

AT THEIR  
ANNIVERSARY MEETING  
IN THE  
Parish-Church of *St. Mary-le-Bow*,  
On FRIDAY, *February 20*, 1735.

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By *J O H N L Y N C H*, D. D.  
and Dean of *Canterbury*. *K*

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L O N D O N:  
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M D C C X X X V I.



Bow-Vestry.

February 20, 1735.

*At the Anniversary Meeting of the  
Society for the Propagation of the  
Gospel in Foreign Parts.*

**A** Greed, That the Thanks of the  
SOCIETY be given to the Re-  
verend the Dean of *Canterbury*, for  
his Sermon Preached this Day before  
the SOCIETY, and that He be desired  
to Print the same.

*David Humphreys, Secretary.*



ACTS V. 38, 39.

----*If this Counsel, or this Work be of Men, it will come to nought : But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.*

**T**HESE are the Words of the wise Gamaliel, who was had in reputation among all the People of the Jews, and whose Advice here given to the Council or *Sanhedrim* shews how justly he deserved it.

THE Occasion of it was this; St. *Peter* and the other Apostles, as soon as they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and thus enabled to work all kinds of Miracles, in evidence of their divine Commission, taught and made Disciples in the Name of Jesus, and every where proclaim'd to what Glory and Honour the God of

their Fathers had advanced that very Person, whom they had *slain and hanged on a Tree*; how he had raised him from the Dead, seated him as his beloved Son at his own right hand, and exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour, so that there was *no Salvation*, no Forgiveness of Sins, nor any Rewards in Heaven to be expected by Men, but thro' *his Name* and Means. These Doctrines, together with the Boldness and the Powers whereby they converted Multitudes to the Gospel, so affected and enraged *his Betrayers and Murderers*, that they were cut to the Heart, and took counsel to slay them, in hope that they and their Opinions would perish together. But here Gamaliel interpos'd, and advis'd to more pious and prudent Measures, to such as might probably detect the Cheat if they were Impostors, and at the same time not inhanse their own Guilt, if they only bore witness to the Truth. Such Pretences as these (says he) are not new or unheard of things; we have Instances within our memory of Persons who upon like Insinuations, have gathered Followers, and raised Seditions among the People. Thus Theudas, and after him Judas of Galilee, *boasting themselves* to be sent by God, had a number of Men join'd themselves with them; yet each of them perish'd,



*and all as many as believed them were scatter'd and brought to nought. And if the Pretences of this new Sect be grounded upon the same weak Foundation, their Fate will be the same too; but if they are indued with Power from on high, the most illegal and desperate methods you can take to suppress them will be to no purpose; Take heed therefore what ye intend to do as touching these Men; refrain from all Acts of Violence and Cruelty, and let them alone till you see farther into the Progress and Event of their Undertakings, for if this Counsel or this Work be of Men, it will of itself, or by divine Providence, come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, 'tis vain and impious to attempt it, lest haply ye be found to fight against God.*

THE Character of Gamaliel, with the Wisdom and Goodness of his Advice, so far prevail'd in Council, as to prevent their passing a Sentence of Death upon the Apostles. But to give his Reasoning its full force, as well as to suit it to the Occasion of our present Meeting, I propose to discourse on these Words in the following Method.

*First, To set before you the just Grounds there were to judge, if this Counsel, or this Work,*

*Work, in which the Apostles and their Followers were engaged, was of Men only, it would come to nought.*

*Secondly, To represent to you the sudden and surprizing Progress they made, and how mightily the Word of God, out of their Mouths, grew and prevail'd.*

*Thirdly, To enquire into what Cause this wonderful Event can be resolved, and how it came to pass that an Undertaking so little likely to succeed should thus prevail and flourish. And,*

*Lastly, To urge the Success it then had, as an Encouragement to, and Obligation upon us, to preserve and spread the Knowledge of this Gospel in our PLANTATIONS, and COLONIES, and FACTORIES abroad.*

I am first to set before you the just Grounds Gamaliel had to judge, *if this Work and Counsel was of Men it would come to nought.* And if we consider the Character and Circumstances either of the Persons, who were the Instruments first employed to preach the Gospel, or of those to whom it was preached, there will appear little reason to imagine such a Doctrine should ever prosper in the Hearts of the one, or in the Hands of the other.

WHEN

WHEN the Christian Religion first began it's progress from *Jerusalem*, *not many wise Men after the Flesh*, *not many Mighty*, *not many Nobles* were called; but Persons of obscure and mean original, whose influence could have no reach, and whose external appearance had nothing to recommend them to human favour or regard; "Men could not well be lower" (says a modern \* Unbeliever) in point of "Understanding than those to whom the Gospel was first preach'd," and who were afterwards the Preachers of it: and as they had no natural Cunning to devise Fables, or be the Inventors of the Doctrines they delivered; so few of them had any helps from Education, *but the Speech and Preaching of them all was without the enticing words of Man's Wisdom*, without Art or Address, without the Deceits of Learning and Philosophy to beguile and confound, or the Charms of Oratory to blind and captivate, their Hearers into a Belief of such Facts and *Doctrines as seem'd foolish and strange*, and incredible to the wisest of them. And if their Preaching fail'd, they had no Riches to bribe Men into their Opinions, nor Power to force their Will to act against the conviction of their Judgment. *The Weapons of their*

\* *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, p. 309.

*their Warfare were not carnal, but spiritual; their Orders were to go forth as Sheep in the midst of Wolves, to preach the Gospel in the Spirit of the Gospel, and to commend themselves to every Man's Conscience, by the Manifestation of its Truth, by the Reasonableness of its Precepts, and by the Perfection of their own Example. And were the Mighty, the Noble, and the Wise to be caught by Schemes without any Temptation of worldly Interest or Grandeur, to be enticed by Words without Eloquence, to be convinced by Reasonings without Art, or constrained by Persuasions without Force? Sure, humanly speaking, their Enemies had little reason to fear, or their Friends to expect, Success, from such Instruments.*

NOR will Circumstances appear more promising, if we consider what sort of Persons were to receive the Gospel.

HAD their Notions been unsettled, and their Minds not as yet formed to any System of Religion, these new Teachers might have hoped to introduce *the Truth as it is in Jesus*, among them with success; but on the contrary, when Christianity was first publish'd, both Jews and Gentiles were fixed and rivetted in several favourite Opinions, and violently prejudiced against any Doctrines that should alter or overthrow



throw them, so that the Spreaders of such Doctrines (besides the odium of being thought Apostates from the Religion of their Country) were sure to meet with the utmost opposition from Learning, Bigotry, and Superstition.

YET had the favour and countenance of Authority gone along with them, and *the Kings and Rulers of the Earth took council together* with them, it might perhaps in time have been accomplish'd, and establish'd, under their Protection and Encouragement, with more ease, than by the Hands, the Labours, the Preaching, or the Miracles of the Apostles. But these Evangelists were not only destitute of any such Assistance, but were to expect the severest treatment from that quarter; all the Powers of this World were against them; *Bonds and Imprisonments did in every City abide them*; and all who taught or believed in the name of Christ were sure to be treated as the *off-scouring of the World*, as Enemies both to God and Men, and as the causes of all the Calamities that beset the *Roman Empire*.

HOWEVER under Circumstances so discouraging, the Innocence and Resolution of the Sufferers, the Patience and the Joy wherewith they continued *Faithful unto Death*; the intrinsic Excellency of the Doctrines which they

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taught;

taught, the reasonableness and perfection of its Precepts, and the greatness of the Rewards promis'd to the performance of them, might have overcome all Obstacles and Dangers, and have brought Men to Faith in Christ and an Obedience to his Commands, had they been wise and good, had they sought *Truth in the love of it*, had they been desirous to *grow in Knowledge and in Grace*, and to raise and improve and perfect their notions and their practice: But the Apostle describes both Jews and Gentiles under a quite different character, as *Men given up to vile Affections and a reprobate Mind, as holding in unrighteousness, what by the Light of Reason or former Revelations, they knew to be the truth, whose Judgments were blinded by their Lusts, and whose Lives were in no degree answerable to those Rules in which they had already been instructed, and which they profess'd to take for their Guidance and Direction; and therefore there was little reason to expect a Religion which is most severe in its moral restraints, should ever recommend itself to the corrupt taste of a debauch'd World.*

So that all the influence which flows from Education, or Power, or Vice, was turn'd against the first Preachers of Christianity, and  
*what*

*what enticing Words* could ever gain Men over from Persuasions which they had entertain'd from their Youth, and from Habits most grateful to sensual Inclinations, to such as less suit with their Dispositions and their Practice; and on account of which, they then expected to be persecuted, and it may be *to resist unto Blood*? What *Work or Counsel* can the best improved Art or Skill of Man devise, that shall answer these Effects? Sure he *who seeth as Man seeth* must judge this to be not only a very dangerous, but also a very improbable and fruitless Undertaking.

BUT (as the Apostle argues) *the Foolishness of God is wiser than Men, and the Weakness of God stronger than Men*; and if we proceed to enquire in the Second Place, into the true matter of Fact, we shall find, notwithstanding all these Difficulties and Perils which thus on every side did encompass them, *how mightily the Word of God grew and prevail'd* under the conduct of those to whom the Care of it was committed in it's infant State.

Now 'tis evident from the Records of those times, that as the Commission by which they acted was to *go into all the World and preach the Gospel to every Creature*; so, in the execution of it, they *fulfill'd the Work of their Ministry* by dispersing themselves into the several



parts of the Earth, which were then known and discovered; and with what success these Attempts were attended, we are there sufficiently inform'd. For no sooner did that Apostle, who is chiefly referr'd to in our Text, and the little Flock which he had gathered together, publicly declare *that same Jesus whom the Jews had crucified, to be the Son of God, their Lord and Christ*, but he immediately gain'd an Accession of three thousand Believers, (*Acts ii. 41.*) which soon afterwards encreas'd to about five thousand Souls, (*Acts iv. 4.*) and, in general, Numbers were in like proportion *daily adding to the Church.*

AND as St. Peter was thus successful among the Jews, so likewise was that *chosen Vessel*, who was appointed with him to accomplish the Fulness of the Gentiles, happily instrumental in *making known among them the unsearchable Riches of Christ*; for by him a great door, and *effectual*, was open'd to their Conversion; they heard the Tydings of Salvation, which he came to publish with Gladness, *entreated that they might be preached to them again*; and as many of such as were disposed to the Love of Truth, or prepared in the Spirit of their Minds for *eternal Life*, glorify'd the Word of the Lord by believing and obeying it.

So



So sudden and mighty was the Encrease of the Gospel by the hands and in the days of the Apostles, and after their Decease, (shortly after, for the Completion of so great an Event) such Multitudes as no man could number, of all Nations, and People, and Tongues, were perswaded to become Christians, as render'd this Sect a Terror to its Enemies, and enabled its earliest Apologists to plead its Numbers in its defence. The former complain'd that the Contagion of the Christian Name (for in such language they were then pleas'd to speak of it) had spread itself among all Orders and Degrees of Men, so far and wide, as in a manner to have laid desolate their Temples, and to have put an end to their Sacrifices and Worship; whilst the latter represented to their Emperors, that their Courts, their Camps, their Cities, their Provinces were all full of Converts, and that 'twas impossible to extirpate them, without depopulating their Dominions.

ALL those Discouragements and Terrors, which to Men, who see but imperfectly into the deep things of God, seem'd so likely to prevent its Progress, had no weight or influence to hinder the Gospel of Christ. The Apostles, who first, out of fear, forsook their Master, soon profess'd themselves to be witnesses to the Truth  
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of his Cause, and ready to endure the greatest Torments for his sake; they who had no Education or Art to gain Attention or Respect, had *now a Mouth and Wisdom, which all their Adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist.*

THE Men of Learning and Penetration, both of *Greece and Rome*, among whom Philosophy and the Liberal Arts were studied and understood, received Christ Jesus for their Lord. All Offence from the Cross now ceas'd among the Jews. The Kings and Rulers of the Earth themselves came to glory in it; and, what is yet more surprizing, the true Converts to the Gospel were regenerate and born again, they enter'd as it were into a new Being, became new Creatures, and were so transform'd by the renewing of their Minds, as to *be holy in all manner of Conversation.* So wonderful and happy an Effect had the Gospel upon the Lives of its first Professors, that 'twill almost admit of a dispute, which were the greater Miracle, the Numbers converted, or the Efficacy of the Conversion.

AND to what cause can we ascribe this? or by what means could it come to pass, that an Attempt, which, according to the best improv'd Art and Skill of Man, was so little likely to succeed, should thus prevail and flourish?

And

And this I am now in the third Place to clear up and account for.

AND here those who are desirous to set aside the first Cause, and to represent *this Work and Counsel to be of Men only*, attempt to introduce such a Series of second Causes concurring at that time, and such a happy Coincidence of conspiring Circumstances, as they think sufficient to bring about such an Event, without any recourse to a divine or supernatural Agent. They alledge that the Christian System is so contrived and adapted in many Branches of it, as to render it acceptable to the different Apprehensions, Tempers, and Circumstances of sinful Men. The virtuous Lives and the courageous Deaths of the first Martyrs, might work incredible things upon weak and compassionate Minds; especially among the lower People, who seldom fail to be, right or wrong, on the suffering side. Their having all things in common, and the charitable Distribution of all Goods and Possessions among the Faithful, might attract, if not bribe, the indigent and needy to their Party. The Reasonableness, Purity, and Perfection of the Christian Morals, might reconcile and bring all Men of Wisdom, Probity, and Virtue into the Interests of the Gospel. And these Causes

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producing natural Effects, might, in time, so increase and add to their Numbers, that the Rulers of the Earth, who at first thought this Doctrine below their notice, might find it at last beyond their power, to suppress. This is the Solution those Men give, who would account for this Event by natural Causes; and such as will not allow some of these Causes to have had weight on any of the Springs of this Work, seem I think to judge as wrongly. Many of these Circumstances might contribute somewhat, in a natural way, to the Progress and Advancement of the Christian Faith; but take all of them together, they were absolutely insufficient, either to plant or spread the Gospel, so far and swiftly as it took root and flourish'd in the World. If then the natural and visible Causes, which concurr'd to this great Effect, bear no proportion to the Effect produced, we must trace it up to an higher Principle, and there only we shall find the true Cause of this Success. *This Work and Counsel was not of Man*, no human Wisdom could devise it, no human Strength could effect it; it must stand where St. Paul hath placed it, *in the Wisdom and the Power of God*. For to what Cause can we ascribe the Courage, wherewith the Apostles



undertook and carried it on with triumph, but to the Spirit and Power with which they were endued? What Authority, less than that of God, could engage them to undertake, what Assistance, less than Divine, could enable them to accomplish this great Work? To what Cause can we ascribe that sudden Change of Opinions in their Converts, how immediately they were persuaded by the Reasoning of the Apostles to become Christians, and to confess at all hazards, that he was the Christ, whom they had before denied and blasphemed, but to the Influence of him who alone can open the Eyes of their Understanding, and *turn Men from Darknes to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God?* To what Cause can we ascribe that no less wonderful Change of Practice consequent upon their Conversion, but to the Assistances of that divine Spirit which *worketh in us both to will and to do of his good Pleasure?* To what Cause can we ascribe the surprizing Conquests they made in opposition to Authority, nay over Authority itself, but to him who is mightier than the mightiest, and hath the Hearts of Kings under his Rule and Governance? *If the Lord himself had not been on our side* (might the Apostles truly say) *if the Lord himself had not been on*

*our side, when the Errors and Inclinations of the World and the united Forces of human Wisdom and Power rose up against us, this Work and Counsel must have come to nought.* The Success therefore which it met with, proves that it was truly his Hand, and that he only did or could bring it to pass.

BUT if it be urged, in bar to this Argument, that Success is not a proper Measure of Truth; or if it be, it will plead with the same force for the Religion of *Mahomet* as of CHRIST; it will not be difficult to answer this Objection, and to shew a wide Difference between these two Cases.

'TIS readily granted, Success is one of those Arguments Men are apt to make too free with, and to reckon that to be the Work of God, which he only permits to be done by Men; but if it appears, in the case before us, (and that Man must be unacquainted with the Writings of the Scriptures, to whom it doth not appear) that, from the earliest Promise of a Messiah, the Jewish Prophets unanimously concur in foretelling, by a great Variety both of plain and figurative Expressions, the Increase and Extent of his Dominion, that when *Shiloh* should come, unto him should the Gathering of the People be; (Gen. xlix. 10.) that  
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*he should not only raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel, but likewise be a Light to the Gentiles, and Salvation unto the end of the Earth; (Isaiah xlix. 6.) that Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom, should be given unto him, that all People, Nations, and Languages, should serve him (Daniel vii. 14.) that he should speak Peace unto the Heathen, (Zach. ix. 10.) and that through him from the rising of the Sun even to the going down of the same the Name of God should be great among the Gentiles, and that, in every place Incense and a pure Offering should be offered unto it; (Malachi i. 11.) and if after his Manifestation, he himself declared his Gospel should be preached in all the World for a Witness unto all Nations; (Matth. xxiv. 14.) and if according to these uniform Predictions this Gospel was (as I have shewn) thus taught and embraced; is not the surprizing Success of it, consider'd as a Completion of all these Prophecies, a Proof that this was the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God, as well as the Effect of his divine Power?*

AND Success may be admitted as a good Argument, in this Case, and yet not be allow'd to have the same weight in the Religion of *Mahomet*: for beside that his Character ap-

pears too suspected and bad to support the Honour of his being a Messenger from God; beside that this Impostor was not attested to by any former Prophecies; other material Differences appear between these two Religions, and such as may sufficiently shew the one to be of divine, the other only of human Extracſion.

“ It was the ill Lives of the Professors of  
“ Christianity (as a late \* Infidel has observed)  
“ which prepared the way for that Success  
“ this Religion first met with;” and for those  
Profelyets it has since gain’d, and is “ still  
gaining” in the World. The whole Rise,  
and Progress, and Establishment of his Con-  
quests may be accounted for by human Policy  
and Strength. The Doctrines he taught, were  
suited to the Wishes, the Interests, and the  
Ambition of Men; they were contrived with  
the utmost Cunning to make *provision for the  
Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof*, in the Life that  
now is, and to gratify them without measure  
and without end in that which is to come; and  
his method of enforcing them was by Terror  
and a Sword, by all the Arts of Cruelty and  
Persecution. But how different was the Spi-  
rit, the Beginning, and the Settlement of  
Christi-

\* Christianity as old, &c. p. 407.



Christianity, whose Apostles and Evangelists never humour'd or flatter'd any Prejudice, Lust, or Vice, who never *caught Men with wicked Guile* or Artifice, or aim'd at any Dominion but such as might restrain and subdue the inordinate Affections and Passions of Men to the Will of God; and whose Victories were obtain'd not by the *Noise*, Confusion, and Violence of *Warriours*, but by the Testimony of their own Blood, by *glad Tydings of Peace*, by the still Voice of Reason, by the Word of Truth, and the Excellency of their Doctrine, assisted by the Spirit, the Favour, and the Blessing of God? If then we consider the different Nature as well as Means of propagating the Christian and Mahometan Religion, we may from thence discover the difference of their Original; for if *the Work or Counsel of the one were of Men*, it might by human Means have prevail'd; but if the other had not *been of God*, it must certainly have been overthrown in its beginning, or have soon *come to nought*.

FROM this Account of our Religion I proceed in the last Place to urge the Encouragement this ministers to us, and the Obligations it lays upon us, to preserve and spread the Knowledge of this Gospel in our PLANTATIONS, and COLONIES, and FACTORIES abroad.

AND

AND however insufficient we may think ourselves for these Things, much may be done by us, and much is required from us, for the Furtherance of this Work; for the first planting the Gospel was not so absolutely miraculous, as to leave no room for Men in After-Ages, by human and christian Means, to preserve and enlarge its Conquests; and the first Commission to publish this Revelation was not confin'd to the Apostles, but continues a Duty upon all succeeding Christians, *'till the Fullness of the Gentiles be come in, and the Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.* The chief Point indeed this Society has in view by sending Missionaries into their Settlements, is to keep up and cultivate among our own People that Faith in God and Christ, that Sense of Piety and Virtue they carried abroad with them; and to endeavour, that their *Children also and their Households after them may be brought up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord,* and taught and exhorted to remember their Creator, and to reverence their Redeemer, *in the days of their Youth.* And if these Means be not sufficient of themselves to attain these Ends, God's *Grace we know is sufficient for us,* and a constant Supply of it was

was promis'd, not only to the Apostles and primitive Christians, but *to us and to our Children, nay to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call,* (Acts ii. 39.)

THE Designs indeed of this Society, as far as they can be effected, are yet larger, and those who are employ'd by us, in this Work, are to *strive* (with St. Paul) *to preach the Gospel where it has not yet been named,* (Rom. xv. 20.) to make Disciples in heathen Nations, to baptize them into this Faith, and to *teach them to observe and do all Things whatsoever Christ hath commanded.* And tho' it would be an unwarrantable Presumption in us to expect that God should give like Demonstrations of his Power to their Mission as he did to this Apostle's; yet we may reasonably hope, that the Attestation which was given to those Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghost which were then wrought, may be a good Foundation for others to come into the Belief of it, from those Accounts. Tho' they are not to expect an equal Portion of the Spirit with which he was endued; yet it should be remember'd his Labours were not without Effect, even when he exerted no higher Power than that of moral Persuasion. *When he reason'd of Righteousness, Temperance and Judgment to come,*

*Felix trembled, (Acts xxiv. 25.) and certain Men clave unto him at Athens, and believed, (Acts xvii. 34.) and others desired to hear him again, (ver. 32) when he disputed in the Synagogue with the Jews and in the Market with the Philosophers. And if fit Persons are authorized and sent abroad into our Plantations to make known among the Gentiles of this Age the extraordinary Light this divine System has given to natural Reason, the gracious Discoveries it reveals to us of Pardon and Forgiveness of Sin by the Atonement and Mediation of the Son of God, the Helps and Assistances it assures to us in the Performance of our Duty, by the unerring Example of his Life, by the holy Precepts of his Religion, and by the Supplies of divine Grace which he hath obtain'd for all who are qualify'd to ask and to receive it, and the Certainty of a future Recompence to reward our sincere Endeavours to do the Will of God, by the continual Intercession he still maketh for us at the right Hand of his Father; I see no cause to doubt but that these Arguments would still have their due Weight and Influence, and incline Men to receive such glad Tydings, with like Joy and good Effect as those did who heard them from Paul or Apollos, or any other Ministers by whom they believed.*

WITH



WITH respect to human Means, the present Missionaries seem in some instances to have the advantage of those who were first sent. The Apostles were often unwelcome Guests where they travell'd on this Mission, and the Jews stirr'd up all People to ill-treat and persecute them, and to contradict and blaspheme their Doctrine; whereas this Society hath been invited and intreated by several of our Colonies to send forth Labourers into this plenteous and distant Harvest; they have own'd the need they stood in of such Assistants, and assured us it should be their “ \* Care and Study to encourage their pious Labours, to protect their Persons, and to improve by their Instructions.” The first Preachers of Christianity had the Force of Authority to contend with; the Missionaries who are sent by us act under the Favour and Countenance of it. That Prince, who preserved this Religion in Purity at home, incorporated this Society, and empower'd them to propagate it in his Dominions abroad; and every succeeding Reign has encouraged and supported it, and graciously vouchsafed those Helps and Assistances they have been applied to for it.

\* *Dr. Humphreys's Historical Account of this Society*, p. 48.

BUT though we receive and acknowledge these Advantages with all Thankfulness, our Trust and Confidence for Success is on an higher Aid: This Counsel is of God, this is the Gospel of his Son; and he who took so much care in the first planting it, we doubt not, will withhold no necessary means from those, who sincerely endeavour to support and propagate it; he who commanded it should be *made known to all Nations for the Obedience of Faith*, will enable those Pastors and Teachers to *make full proof of their Ministry*, who are sent hence not only for *the perfecting of the Saints*, for *the edifying the Body of Christ*, but to do the Work of Evangelists among the barbarous and idolatrous Nations that surround them. So promising a Prospect have we of seeing the Fruits of our own Righteousness from the *Ministration of this Service*.

AND great and pressing Obligations lie upon us to promote this Work, and by our Prayers, by our Endeavours, by our Contributions, by every other fit Method, to further the laudable Purposes of this Society.

A just Sense of the Excellency of this Knowledge, of its Sufficiency to make Men *wise unto Salvation*, and of the merciful Intention and Design of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,

Christ, that it should be diffused and spread abroad, are Calls upon all Christians in general to make this *Saving Health known among all Nations.*

A grateful Remembrance of the kind Hand of Providence in early planting and watchfully preserving Christianity in these Kingdoms, in making it known here, either by one of the \* *Apostles*, or in the time when they were on Earth, in never suffering it, from the first shining of this glorious Light, to be totally extinguish'd in this Land; in afterwards reforming it from the Superstitions and Corruptions of Popery; and in continuing and establishing it, in Simplicity and Purity among us, by later Blessings; are additional Motives to engage us to communicate that Light to others, which shined so soon, and so freely among us, and to let our Sense of these Favours appear unto all Men, by *seeking the Profit of many that they may be saved.*

BUT the present Attempts, which we are assured are made from hence to render the good Endeavours of this Society fruitless and ineffectual, and to root out Christianity in those Parts, where we are striving to preserve and plant it, are powerful Incitements to all, who

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\* *Bp Stillingfleet's Orig. Britan. chap. x.*

are in earnest concern'd for the Continuance and Success of the Gospel, to *be jealous over it with a godly Jealousy*; and particularly watchful at this time to guard against their Attacks: for when the *Enemy sows Tares among the Wheat*, it becomes the wise Householder to use fit means to keep the good Seed from being corrupted, and while they lie in wait for every Opportunity to *take away the Word sown in Men's Hearts*, *lest they should believe and be saved*, with what Earnestness and Vigour should we endeavour that it should thrive and bring forth Fruit? Let their Zeal excite ours, and the more industrious our Enemies are to hinder the Gospel of Christ, the more diligent we should be to further and promote it's Interest and Advancement. To this End, let us enable this Society, while they are labouring in the Defence and Confirmation of it themselves at home, to increase the Number of their Missionaries abroad; let us enable them to encourage *faithful and wise Stewards* to undertake this Office, *Workmen that need not be ashamed*, and *such as are able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and to convince the Gainsayers*; and May the Blessing of God make their Labours successful!

F I N I S.

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